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CONGREGATIONALISM

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REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS

OF THE

Congregational Church Union

OF

BOSTON AND VICINITY,

3547.107

READ BY

REV. WILLIAM E. BARTON, D.D.,

AT THE

First Annual Meeting of the Union,

HELD AT THE

OLD SOUTH CHURCH, BOSTON,

JANUARY 21, 1897.

C

Rev. H. E. Burton.
Mar. 30, 1897.

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The Congregational Church Union

OF

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I AM asked to speak tonight of "The present condition of our Boston churches, and the different phases of our denominational problem." It may well be that I am peculiarly disqualified for speaking of these broad questions as a whole, just because the conditions of one church, and the special phases of the problem as it affects that church, are so real to me. Still, all our problems have a common root, and the conditions which confront our denomination are more or less common to all our churches; and even the sufferings or successes of one member are of interest to the whole. Yet, that this report may be relatively free from the inevitable bias of the problem of one man or one church, the material for the several sections of this paper has been gathered by different members of the committee, leaving to me the work of weaving them together, and in some instances of deducing conclusions from the data gathered by others; and, that this paper may be still more truly representative, it has been carefully examined and approved by the Directors of the Church Union.

Boston is still the spring and center of our Congregational work. Chicago has more than twice as many churches of our order, and is demanding with increasing vociferosity that it shall be counted our Congregational center. But if Chicago, through the westward hegira of Congregational strength, ever becomes our Congregational Medina, Boston must ever remain its Mecca. Here is the Capitol of the old Puritan Commonwealth. Here are the Faith Monument and Plymouth Rock. Here moulder the bones of Winthrop and Sewall, of Cotton and Eliot, and the Mathers. Near by were the homes of Bel-

lamy and Hopkins and Emmons, the Dwights and the Edwardses. Here, the old Old South, with the possible exception of Independence Hall, the most sacred building in America, and endeared to us by tenfold more of sacred association, still stands, the monument of that spirit which, having found a church without a bishop, rested not till its walls echoed with a patriotism that demanded a state without a king. The building stands, because the spirit which it represents stands; and it looks down serenely upon the ruins of the Province House, and up to where close together stand and are to stand the Congregational House and the Capitol's gilded dome. Best of all, in spite of the spirit of utility and push and business, the faith of the fathers remains in the bosoms of the sons. Here still beats the warm heart of Congregationalism, whose pulsations may be felt wherever men labor for the simple polity of the New Testament churches, and hold that one is our Master, even Christ, and all we are brethren.

Whatever of glory may belong to other denominations on this soil — and we would not dim their luster — so long as one star differeth from another, no Christian organization can rival the peculiar glory of Congregationalism in New England. Its past, at least, is secure. What Lutherism is to Germany, what Presbyterianism is to Scotland, that, and if possible more, Congregationalism is to America, and above all, to Boston.

It would thus be a singular and sorrowful spectacle if this denomination should fail to make its future worthy of its past, in this its historic home. That it may not thus fail, through the weakness of its peculiar virtue and the excessive emphasis sometimes laid upon its spirit of independence, this Church Union has come into existence.

Much of the work which this Union aspires to do

is undertaken in newer communities by the Home Missionary Society; and the Massachusetts Home Missionary Society has nobly helped in the founding of new churches and the aid of older ones. But the Massachusetts Home Missionary Society must remain the strong right arm of the National Society, whose most important auxiliary it is, and the funds from which much of this work has been maintained are practically exhausted. In Cleveland and Chicago the City Missionary Societies have undertaken and carried on such work as this Union contemplates; but the Boston City Missionary Society, while it has founded some churches in time past, has its sphere limited to the city proper, while most of such work as is now contemplated must be in the suburbs.

It has therefore seemed that if such work as this Union contemplates is to be done at all, it must be done by a new organization. And this is why an over-organized age, which can always find room for one more society, is asked to give a hearing to The Congregational Church Union of Boston and vicinity.

Briefly stated, this Union undertakes to be an aid to our denominational fellowship in the support of the older and depleted but still useful, and the newer and as yet feeble but promising, Congregational enterprises of Greater Boston. Without assigning itself metes and bounds which may never be passed, it assumes as its sphere of influence the Metropolitan Water District, including towns and cities within ten miles of the State House. This area, as you will remember, is not a circle, as the ocean cuts into it, leaving it a waxing crescent. Instead of diminishing our area, however, it enables us to take in the broad Atlantic and Scrooby and Leyden. Within this gibbous crescent are now

ninety-nine Congregational churches. If these may be so banded together for local interests as to act unitedly in the planting of new churches and in the maintenance of old ones, the time need never come when Congregationalism in Boston shall look back to the past as its Golden Age. But apart from such effort as this organization undertakes, no thinking man can question that we are confronted with serious problems, and not a few perils.

In time past, the theory of our church organization has been something like this. If in a given community there are people of Congregational faith who want a church, and they are able to build one and pay the bills, they may do so, and that is the end of it. They will call a council, to be sure. The pastors and delegates will assemble and examine the confession of faith prepared by the brethren, and the chicken salad and cold turkey provided by the sisters, and ask their stock questions and keep their misgivings, if they have any, to themselves, and let the new enterprise live if it can. This Spartan treatment of exposing our infants on the rocks has made tough youngsters; but now and then one gets cold and dies, and we complacently remark that we never really expected that church to live, and we look on in peace while a Methodist or an Episcopal church is erected on its site.

And when a church gets weak, through removals or a shifting of population, it has thrown upon it the burden of deciding for itself how long it must maintain its struggle, and how it is to provide means for its support in a place where it was founded in answer to a Divine call, but where it was never so much needed as now.

To be sure, benevolent individuals, and other

churches, and the Home Missionary Society have all assisted in both these classes of cases. Figures now for the first time obtained show that the Massachusetts Home Missionary Society has in the last twenty-five years — and practically that period represents all that it has done in and about Boston — spent the following sums: For native work in Boston, $100,722 (almost all in the last ten years from a special fund); for foreign work in Boston, $30,760; total for work in Boston, $131,482. For work in the vicinity of Boston, $65,154; total for all work in Boston and vicinity for twenty-five years, $196,636. (See Appendix A.)

The Swett Fund of the Home Missionary Society has practically all been used in this city, and is now nearly exhausted. The Old South has given $300,000 to Boston Congregationalism in the last twenty-five years. Great credit belongs to those who have managed these funds, and the aid given has been large and important. But it is perfectly evident that the ideal condition has not been attained.

That we may not speak in generalities, let us turn to the statistics that have been carefully gathered for this report by Rev. H. A. Bridgman. This is believed to be the best and most accurate collection ever made for this purpose in Boston. Taking the Metropolitan Water District as our area, the following is true of the six leading denominations during the past ten and twenty-five years:

Twenty-five years ago the Baptists had 48 churches, with 13,786 members. They now have 87 churches, with 29,014 members, a gain of 110 per cent. The Episcopalians had 36 churches, and now have 78, with 5,902 members then, and 15,104 now. The Methodists had 54 churches then, and have 82 now, with 9,043 members then, and 18,740

now. The Unitarians had 54 churches then, and have 59 now, and their membership cannot be given; but it is evident that the Unitarians, who were gaining, yet apparently with diminishing rapidity, in the beginning of this 25-year period, are now gaining most slowly of any of the six denominations cited. Of the Presbyterian growth, a word will be said later. They had 3 churches twenty-five years ago, and now have 11, and their membership has increased from 734 to 2,780. In this period, the increase of population has been from 495,567 to 977,583, an increase of 97 per cent. During the same period the Congregational churches have increased from 67 to 99, and membership from 15,034 to 29,335, an increase of 95 per cent. The per cent of increase in the past twenty-five years has been: Population, 97 per cent, Congregational 95, Methodist 107, Baptist 110, Episcopalian 122, Presbyterian 278.

The 10-year statistics show no essential changes except in one or two instances, which will be noted. Not taking your time for all the figures, which are printed and in your hands (see Appendix B.), it is enough to say that the per cent of increase in population in this last decade has been 37, of Congregationalists 33, of Methodists 30, of Episcopalians 34, of Baptists 47, and of Presbyterians 145.

These things deserve remark as between the 10 and 25-year periods:

1. That both Methodists and Episcopalians, who have gained rapidly during the 25-year period as a whole, have gained less rapidly in proportion to population in the last ten years. The Methodist decrease of proportionate gain has been most apparent in membership; where, taking the 25-year period as a whole, the gain was much in excess of population (107 to 97 per cent), and for the last ten years con-

siderably less than the gain of population (30 to 37 per cent). But the Episcopalian decrease of gain, while nearly in the same ratio as to membership (122 to 97, and 34 to 37), shows particularly in benevolence, where with an increase of benevolence of 29 per cent for the whole period, the last ten years have shown a net loss in benevolence of $7,695, or 7 per cent.

These facts concerning our Methodist and Episcopalian friends find a partial explanation in facts familiar to us all. As to the Episcopalians, it may be said that when, a quarter of a century ago, hundreds of people were weary of the excessive dogmatism of our Congregational churches as they then too often were, and of the creeds which were often needlessly and obtrusively rigorous, they turned from the Unitarian churches, which once might have been a haven to them, because they wanted neither controversy nor negation, and brought up somewhat naturally in the Episcopal church. This was particularly true when Phillips Brooks was the most commanding ecclesiastical figure in Boston. This condition has changed somewhat on both sides. There is not the same cause for the exodus, nor is there quite the same attraction that formerly existed.

The Methodist gains have been assisted greatly by immigration, and by the presence in Boston of the Methodist University; but the University now sends many of its best men into the Congregational ministry, and from the figures, it begins to be apparent that Boston is unlikely to become a Methodist community.

2. The most marked percentage of gain has been that of the Presbyterians, and has been almost wholly in the last ten years. They gained but 1 church and 401 members in the first fifteen

years, and have gained 7 churches with 1,645 members in the last ten years. Their total membership, however, is still exceedingly small, being less than one tenth that of either Baptists or Congregationalists, but they are growing rapidly. Their growth is very largely from the provinces, which afford continual reservoir of strength, but the increase of this body in New England is significant, and is an evidence of the strength of a centralized body in planting new enterprises.

3. The proportion of church membership as a whole is keeping pace, and apparently more than keeping pace, with the growth of population. Exact figures cannot, of course, be given without having at hand the statistics of all denominations, the smaller as well as the larger, but there is an apparent increase of considerable size, and chiefly in evangelical churches.

4. The Baptist churches appear to have made the largest positive gain in membership.* And this gain has been most marked in the last ten years. They have gained more rapidly than the population, which is true of no other large body in the latter decade (37 to 47 per cent), though none have fallen far behind the population. It would seem that the period of greatest prosperity for the Unitarians had been prior to this 25-year period, of the Methodists and Episcopalians in the first and second decades of it, and of the Baptists in the last few years. It should be marked, also, that the Baptist gain in benevolence has more than kept pace with their growth in membership. Nothing lies like figures, but if figures are ever to be trusted, this is

* There is reason to believe that Baptist churches revise their rolls less frequently than Congregational, and that these figures would be considerably modified if such revisions were generally practiced.

just now, or has just been, the ascendant body in Boston. Dr. A. J. Gordon was the Phillips Brooks of this denomination. Whether these gains are to continue in like ratio is not certain.

5. The Congregational statistics are far more encouraging than is sometimes thought. Our percentage of gain has been slightly smaller than the Baptists, Episcopalians, or Methodists, but we had a larger membership to start with, and it takes more to give a percentage of gain on a large beginning. Our positive gains have been greatest in number of churches, and in membership they have been greater than any except the Baptists, and within a few hundred of them. Immigration is a fruitful source of increase to Baptists, Methodists, and Episcopalians. Almost all our Congregational growth is native. Our gains are probably the largest of all in native growth. Our benevolence is more than twice as large as any of the others. We have almost, but not quite, kept pace with the population, and have been holding our own as well in the last decade as in any portion of the 25-year period. Our gains have not fluctuated like the rest, but have been steady and continuous, and we still have the largest membership and the largest number of churches of any denomination within the district. Though having the Baptists for a close second, and the Episcopalians and Methodists well round the turn, Congregationalism comes under the wire a full neck ahead in number of churches, in church membership, in financial strength, and in benevolence.

Clearly, this is not discouraging. But there are conditions now confronting us which are modern, and which call for the application of other methods, in part, than those which have made this excellent record possible. For it must be remembered that

we have not kept our proportionate rank. The new conditions which confront us have grown out of our rapid development of the suburbs through means of rapid transit, and the consequent opening of new fields on the one hand, and depletion of old ones on the other.

Let us examine the conditions of several recent or prospective openings in and about Boston, from facts gathered by Rev. C. M. Southgate.

NEW OPENINGS.

A. The Field's Corner Church was started in 1888 with the coöperation of the Massachusetts Home Missionary Society, which guaranteed the pastor's salary. Sympathy and some help were obtained from a neighboring strong church. The first pastorate did little but gather a nucleus in a hired hall. The present pastorate, four years ago, found property which had cost $24,000, $16,000 of which was in a mortgage; 64 members; weekly expenses $40; and weekly income $10. The church was immediately made aware of the situation, which to many seemed hopeless, and was grandly led into the work of lessening the debt and increasing the income. The receipts were pushed up each year; rising in successive years from $300, the first, to $800, $1,500, and $2,100, the aid of the Massachusetts Home Missionary Society being reduced $100 each year, at the request of the church, $1,000 has been expended on improvements and repairs. The church is now strong, but still compelled to great effort. The pastor says: "I never saw such heroic and self-sacrificing effort; the spiritual growth accompanying it has been remarkable." Without help from outside, even this effort would have been insufficient.

B. Roslindale Church was established in 1890, wholly under the Massachusetts Home Missionary Society, in a growing community of young families, on small incomes, most of them struggling to secure their own homes. A building was necessary, and must be planned for future growth. A church has been dedicated worth $27,000, of which $15,000 remains to be paid. Membership has risen from 65 to 207; Sunday school from 40 to 300, with an average attendance of 224, which is already crowding its accommodations. There are 240 families in the parish; $740 has been received from the Boston churches through the Pilgrim Association, besides Home Missionary and Old South aid, which has been limited to assistance on the salary.

C. The Leyden Church was founded in 1896, through the unyielding determination of its promoters, in a field that ought to have been preëmpted for our denomination several years ago. A pledge from the Congregational Church Union enabled it to secure a pastor of the right sort, and success is sure. A lot and building are greatly needed, and the support of Congregationalists in the vicinity is hoped for and expected. If this is done, success will be immediate and magnificent.

D. At Savin Hill, one of our churches has begun a branch Sunday school in "the largest and most needy district in the city, with thousands of people a mile or a mile and a half from any church." Fifty people gather in a temporary building, which they may have to relinquish at any day. A chapel is needed at once, and a strong church would be the certain result.

E. Winthrop Beach has a parish of 500, besides a summer population of several times that number. There is no other church. A temporary building has been rented. There are 19 members, 20 to 40

families; summer congregation, 200 to 250. There is a small conditional grant by the Massachusetts Home Missionary Society, not yet called for and may not be needed, and the prospect is bright.

In the matter of the down-town churches, statistics have been gathered from five Boston churches: Maverick in East Boston, Phillips in South Boston, Winthrop in Charlestown, Park Street in the business section of the city proper, and Shawmut in the South End. These facts, gathered by Rev. Ellis Mendell, are believed to be representative of all our down-town churches. In the last ten years, one of these has had a net decrease of 34 per cent in membership; three others have lost respectively 18, 17, and 14 per cent; and the remaining church has gained 5 per cent. The difference is accounted for in part by the different methods of keeping up the roll, and the revisions to drop members long absent. The same general causes have been at work in all. The total membership of these five churches in 1886 was 3,408, and in 1895 was 2,892, a loss of 516. This is the net loss. The gross loss has been very great, as will hereafter appear. During this period these five churches have had 2,199 additions, of which 1,235, a very large majority, were on confession. Taken as a whole, the additions to these churches were more numerous in the first half than in the second half of this decade, but there were 13 per cent more additions on confession in 1895 than in 1886. It must be conceded that, considering their disadvantages, these churches have done well to show a net loss of only 15 per cent.

These five churches have lost, in the last ten years, 473 by death, 1,211 by letter, and 796 by revision of the roll, a total of 2,480. If to this be added the present absent membership of these churches, 993, which is as really lost to them as if it had been

dismissed, the total loss in this last decade is 3,473, or 65 more than their total membership ten years ago.

When it is remembered that these churches are losing their entire membership once in ten years, and that of the people who constitute their present congregation, somewhat more than 20 per cent drop out each year, it may well be asked whether these five churches have not done bravely to maintain themselves, and to carry on their work with such vigor as they have manifested in this last decade.

Another striking thing should be mentioned. It is shown that of all the losses by letter, a clear majority have gone to other churches in and about Boston, and almost invariably to stronger churches. Moreover, this army of absent members is to a great extent accounted for in like manner. Statistics on this point are manifestly less certain than concerning actual dismissions, which are matters of record. But it appears probable that more than half the absent members of those churches that have revised their rolls within this period, are in other and usually stronger churches in and about Boston.

The decrease in wealth in these churches is clearly shown by the decrease in benevolence. It has fallen off from $38,428 in 1886 to $21,006 in 1895, a loss of 45 per cent. But in these ten years it aggregates $232,409, and represents not only a very respectable sum, but a vast amount of heroic self-denial.

Let us remember this. The problems which confront us in our down-town churches are new. They are not peculiar to our own city or denomination. Other churches here, and our own churches elsewhere, feel them. No city has solved the problem. We have not come this way hitherto. The questions are for us to settle today, and we must find a way.

Let us remember another thing. These churches are not on trial for their lives, but our method of sustaining down-town and weak churches is on trial. It is not Park Street, it is not Berkeley Temple, nor is it the pastor of Union nor of Maverick that is being weighed in the balance. The question is whether our Congregational churches ought not to adopt some more efficient means for maintaining churches of our faith and order in these localities.

Let us remember yet another thing. These churches did not plant themselves where they are. There are several of them which the Lord could not trust with their insurance money if a fire should come, succeeded by a good offer for their corner lots. They are where they were builded by men and women now in Heaven, or Brookline, or Newton, or the Old South. It is not their fault that they are where they are. They are careful and economical, and are raising so much money now from their congregations as to be in constant danger of driving their people to other churches.

Still again. These churches are not where they are to demonstrate any theory, except this, that the Church of Christ ought not to desert the people for the sake of saving itself trouble. One church is known as a free church, another as an institutional church; but these are not the ideas to which these churches are committed. The churches did not go in to demonstrate these ideas. They found themselves where they are and began, each as it believed itself providentially led, to try this and that method of adapting its life to the needs of the people about it. The churches could live more easily if they were to sell and move. The prosperous members could get along more cheaply if they were to go to other churches near by. These churches are where they are, and the men in them are where they are, for

the sake of ministering to men and women about them, who need all the comfort and help which the Gospel can give them. Brethren, the problem is not theirs. It is ours. It belongs to all of us. If they suffer, they suffer vicariously for us all. If they do any good work aided and sustained by us, we are all the doers of it. For we are one body in Christ.

Still again. If it is ever complained that these churches are expensive, remember that it is not missions but churches that these people want. This paper has not discussed the question of mission chapels. They have their place, but the great and permanent need is for churches. The people in these churches are not one whit less respectable than those who have left. They want neither shoddy sermons nor devices that degrade their own self-respect. A large part of their expenses admit of no substantial diminution. It costs as much to keep slates on the roof as it ever did. Insurance, repairs, and all the odds and ends that mount up in the course of the year, cannot be reduced. The janitor costs as much, and ought to have more. The coal and gas cost more than ever, for the church is doing more to burn them. The churches have the same organs that they had in their better days, and the people about them are, on an average, quite as good judges of music as in former times. It is neither dignified nor economical to have cheap or unworthy music. And the ministers at least deserve a living; and while all preaching ought to be better than it is, whoever thinks that poor sermons will do as well as good ones is mistaken. The people in those churches can appreciate, and the most of them are receiving, earnest and effective preaching. And the laborer is worthy of his meat.

Yet another thing. In the midst of shifting and changing, while the home moves out and the store and boarding house move in, what an impressive sight it would be if there were no talk of change in the churches! There is no talk of moving the Roman Catholic Cathedral from the South End to the Back Bay. What a blessing if we could readjust our Congregational strength on lines that are to be permanent, and then hold it! Then, while everything else might change, the Church of Jesus Christ would appear, founded on a rock.

It is probably true that some adjustment of our strength ought to be made. It is probably true that not all our down-town work should be maintained on its present lines. But this is true, that so long as a church is to remain and do its work, it should feel that it is doing it with the approval and support of the whole body; and when the time comes for a change, it should be so made as that no church shall be understood to have surrendered, but that its results may be conserved in some united readjustment, which might usually be done with a mutual gain to the older work, and the extension of our denominational interests in the newer parts of our cities.

We shall never solve these problems so long as each church is left to shift for itself. We shall not hold the strongest outposts if we wait for any individual, who may happen to believe in a church enough to overcome the discouragements attendant upon its organization, to secure the land and unite the people and bring the enterprise to success. This is sometimes done, but it cannot be counted upon to act invariably and effectively. We shall not solve the down-town problem till each down-town church is as royally supported as Ruggles Street, and feels that it has the whole denomination behind it, as does Tremont Temple.

Brethren, let me repeat that this problem belongs to us all. Are we heart and soul Congregationalists because we believe in the New Testament polity and in the faith of our Pilgrim sires? We gladly recognize the growth of other denominations, but shall not their growth provoke us to love and good works; and among our good works ought we not to count this, that we shall never let them exceed our own progress and zeal for the Gospel? Are the principles and privileges, which have been bought so dearly, worth striving for and perpetuating? Is there any denomination that has a better right to lead in Boston? If not, let us stand by the larger interests of our denomination in Greater Boston.

Now of all that has been said, this is the sum. We are one, and our interests are one. They that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please themselves. And this: when our church life and activity are tested in the crucible, the best evidence of its right to continue and increase is not simply in the cleansing of lepers and giving sight to the blind, nor yet in the orthodoxy of our creed nor the beauty of our service, but in the fact that now, as ever where Christ is and works, the poor have the Gospel preached unto them.

Any organization that can prepare the way of the Lord for the founding of new churches in our suburbs, and strengthen the things that remain in the city proper, can unify our efforts and serve to express the consensus of Congregational opinion, and wisely collect and expend money contributed for this purpose, has come to the kingdom for such a time as this.

WILLIAM E. BARTON,
H. A. BRIDGMAN,
ELLIS MENDELL,
C. M. SOUTHGATE,
Committee.

APPENDIX A. (See page 9.)

Grants made by the Massachusetts Home Missionary Society to Churches and Missions in Boston and vicinity for the last twenty-five years.

	BOSTON.			VICINITY.	
	Native.	Foreign.	Total.		Grand Total.
1872				$600	$600
1873	$200	$300	$500	1,000	1,500
1874		300	300	900	1,200
1875		300	300	3,150	3,450
1876		300	300	3,450	3,750
1877		300	300	2,900	3,200
1878		300	300	3,025	3,325
1879	300	300	600	3,025	3,625
1880	725	300	1,025	2,975	4,000
1881	675		675	2,837	3,512
1882	825		825	2,950	3,775
1883	675		675	2,775	3,450
1884	425	300	725	3,000	3,725
1885	1,851	500	2,351	2,400	4,751
1886	3,725	200	3,925	2,262	6,187
1887	31,661	500	3,666	2,075	5,741
1888	3,710	1,000	4,710	2,705	7,415
1889	6,960	1,700	8,660	1,975	10,635
1890	11,135	3,510	14,645	1,910	16,555
1891	11,250	3,445	14,695	2,710	17,405
1892	10,900	3,320	14,220	3,235	17,455
1893	10,550	3,465	14,015	3,785	17,800
1894	11,600	3,715	15,315	3,760	19,075
1895	10,950	3,685	14,635	3,250	17,885
1896	11,100	3,020	14,120	2,500	16,620
For ten years,	$100,722	$30,760	$131,482	$65,154	$196,636
'86 to '96,	$91,321	$27,365	$118,681 Boston	$27,905 Vicinity	$146,586
'72 to '87,	$9,401	$3,400	$12,801	$37,249	$50,050

Vicinity includes: Hyde Park, Malden, Medford, Melrose, Quincy, Revere, Saugus, Somerville, and Dedham.

APPENDIX B.

Religious Growth of Greater Boston.

(Prepared for the Boston Congregational Church Union.)

Statistics of six denominations, in the following twenty-eight cities and towns, within a ten-mile circuit of Boston, comprising the Metropolitan Water District. These statistics cover the last twenty-five years (1871–96) and the last ten years (1886–96).

Boston.	Winchester.
Nahant.	Medford.
Swampscott.	Somerville.
Lynn.	Cambridge.
Saugus.	Belmont.
Revere.	Arlington.
Winthrop.	Lexington.
Chelsea.	Waltham.
Everett.	Watertown.
Malden.	Newton.
Melrose.	Brookline.
Wakefield.	Hyde Park.
Stoneham.	Milton.
Woburn.	Quincy.

1871–1896.		CHURCHES.			MEMBERSHIP.				BENEVOLENCE.			
		1871	1896	Gain.	1871	1896	Gain.	Per cent.	1871	1896	Gain.	Per cent.
Population	Baptist	48	87	39	13,786	29,014	15,228	110	$	$124,935	$	
1895 977,583	Congregational	67	99	32	15,034	29,335	14,301	95	199,048	256,641	57,593	29
1870 495,596	Episcopalian	36	78	42	5,902	15,104	9,202	122	71,671	92,122	20,451	28
Gain 481,987	Methodist	54	82	28	9,043	18,740	9,697	107	25,645	40,926	15,281	59
Per ct. gain 97	Presbyterian	3	11	8	734	2,780	2,046	278	3,755	4,901	1,146	30
	Unitarian *	54	59	5								
1886–1896		1886	1896	Gain.	1886	1896	Gain.	Per cent.	1886	1896	Gain.	Per cent.
Population	Baptist	70	87	17	19,982	29,014	9,032	47	$81,842	$124,935	$43,093	52
1895 977,583	Congregational	78	99	21	21,965	29,335	7,370	33	222,602	256,641	34,039	15
1885 710,710	Episcopalian	61	78	17	11,197	15,104	3,907	34	99,817	92,122	loss 7,695	loss .07
Gain 266,873	Methodist	66	82	16	14,432	18,740	4,308	30	32,376	40,926	8,550	26
Per ct. gain 37	Presbyterian	4	11	7	1,135	2,780	1,645	145	1,314	4,901	3,587	273
	Unitarian	55	59	4								

* The Unitarians do not register their membership or benevolence.

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